

Communications Skills Workshop

Tuesday 9th July 9.15-10.15 1 hour

Small Group work: 6-7 pupils in each group

Intended Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this session, pupils will be able to:

1. Understand the importance of communication as a medical student
2. Explore a presenting problem with a patient
3. Communicate effectively in a difficult situation

This maps to the MSC Guidance on effective communication skills for medical school applicants:

<https://www.medschools.ac.uk/studying-medicine/applications>

Domain 3: Communication, partnership and teamwork
Communicate effectively

Applicable skills and attributes:

Effective communication, including reading, writing, listening and speaking
The ability to communicate effectively with a wide range of different people, often in difficult situations, is essential to all aspects of medical practice.
Good communication skills are one of things that patients value the most in their doctors.
Medical schools look for evidence of good communication skills during the application process with the understanding that their students will learn at medical school how to apply these skills in a clinical setting and in different clinical situations.

Timetable

Icebreaker	10 minutes
Effective Communication Skills Brainstorm	10 minutes
Scenario 1	17 minutes
Scenario 2	17 minutes
Review	5 minutes
Move to next workshop	1 minute

Lesson Plan: 60 minute session

Icebreaker: 10 minutes

This is the first small group workshop. Pupils may not know each other.
Go round the group and ask them to mention the most interesting conversation they have ever had.

Effective Communication Skills Brainstorm: 10 minutes

This is a small group discussion.

Pupils will reflect on what skills are needed for effective consultation skills with a patient. Ensure pupils cover key aspects of the consultation, which is mentioned in the mark sheet below. Bring in your clinical experience into the discussion.

Then ask them to consider clinical teams, and the different members in each of these. Ask them to consider how a doctor/medical student fits effectively into this team and the skills needed for maintaining a good team spirit. This should include respecting others in the team, effective modes of communication, clarifying chains of responsibility, effective handover skills and leadership skills.

Role play: 34 minutes

Ask two pupils to volunteer to take part in role play of 2 scenarios. If there are no volunteers, allocate them randomly.

A medical student facilitator will take on the role of the simulated patient, and will use the provided script to take on their role

The other pupils will observe and provide feedback on the encounter- they will utilise the feedback proforma provided below, in order to write objective feedback:

Each consultation will last for a maximum of 5 minutes with 12 minutes for feedback and discussion (17 minutes for each scenario)

Please ensure a pupil is keeping time and give a warning at 4 minutes into the consultation, that there is 1 minute remaining.

Use Pendleton feedback to generate discussion amongst students

We ask for feedback on how the candidate felt the session went:

Positives (things that were done well)

Then the group (and tutor) will provide feedback on the areas that went well

We ask for feedback on how the candidate felt the session went:

The learner states what could be improved

Group/tutor state the areas that could be developed (and how).

Scenario 1: Gathering Information: 17 minutes

Information for pupil:

You are working in a nursing home and go to change the sheets for Martin/Martina Lebowski. Martin/Martina tells you that they have had a fall. Find out more about what happened.

Information for simulated patient:

You are Martin/Martina Lebowski. You are a 90 year old resident of the residential home, who has been living there for 5 years. You were coming back from the bathroom when you tripped over your slippers. You landed on your hands and knees at the time, and got up straight after. Since then, you have pain in your wrists and you are struggling to move them. You have not injured any other part of the body.

You would like some painkillers for this, although you are not specific on which one.

You don't want to go to hospital unless the pupil is able to give you a good explanation.
You tend to hate hospitals as your wife died in the local hospital 10 years ago and it still brings back bad memories.

You have always been mobile and can walk without any aids. This is the first fall that you have had, and it has really upset you. You have never needed any additional support whilst being in the residential home.

You have high blood pressure and take one tablet (amlodipine) for this. You are otherwise well. You have no family now. Your wife died 10 years ago and you had no children. You are a popular resident in the home and are usually responsible for organising the board game activities for residents. You also have a good relationship with the carers, and are well respected by them.

The process is then repeated for scenario 2

Candidate 1	Candidate covered (✓)
Introduce themselves	
Elicit the name of the patient	
Find out the main issue	
Uses lots of open questions	
Uses closed questions appropriately	
Explore the issue in detail	
Doesn't interrupt	
Uses silence if appropriate	
Show empathy	
Picks up cues	
Demonstrates, active listening (e.g nods or other facial/body expressions)	
Good eye contact	
Good rapport	
Explores possible solutions to help the patient	
Doesn't push own agenda onto patient but respects wishes and explores them	
Considers the impact on the patient holistically e.g daily activities	
Concludes the conversation well	

Scenario 2: Dealing with a Difficult Patient: 17 minutes

Information for pupil:

You are working in the local hospital as a volunteer. A patient, Henry/Henrietta Tamworth, starts shouting at staff in an angry manner. You go across to find out the problem.

Information for simulated patient:

You are Henry/Henrietta Tamworth, a 40 year old patient. You have been in hospital for the past 10 days after being admitted with pneumonia. You are keen to go home but have just been advised by the doctor that the antibiotics you have been given are not working and you will need to stay in hospital for a further 2-3 days at least. This has made you angry and you would like the staff to change their mind.

You work as a social worker and there have been staff shortages recently. You need to get back to work, in order to ensure that the work is sorted. There are no funds to ensure adequately skilled social workers will be able to cover your work.

You live alone and spend most of your time working. You still enjoy reading but don't have time for any other hobbies.

You are also busy looking after your elderly mum, who lives nearby. You tend to do the shopping and cleaning for her. Your brother is helping at the moment, but he has had to visit from Yorkshire, to help her. You are getting pressure from him as well to come back home.

Although you are angry, you will remain polite throughout the conversation. However, you will raise your voice at times as evidence of frustration.

You will calm down if the pupil enables you to calm down, and will consider other options if their arguments are reasonable. For example, you will consider remaining in hospital if the pupil explains the dangers of going home.

Candidate 2	Candidate covered (✓)
Introduce themselves	
Elicit the name of the patient	
Find out the main issue	
Uses lots of open questions	
Uses closed questions appropriately	
Explore the issue in detail	
Doesn't interrupt	
Uses silence if appropriate	
Show empathy	
Acknowledges the patients emotions	
Picks up cues	
Demonstrates, active listening (e.g nods or other facial/body expressions)	
Good eye contact	
Good rapport	
Explores possible solutions to help the patient	
Doesn't push own agenda onto patient but respects wishes and explores them	
Considers the impact on the patient holistically e.g daily activities	
Concludes the conversation well	

Review: 5 minutes

There will be an opportunity for pupils to reflect on the qualities needed to effectively communicate, based on the scenarios that they have seen.

Tutors will summarise the qualities on the board during the discussion.

Move to next workshop: 1 minute